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Yippie Librarianship
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YIPPIE

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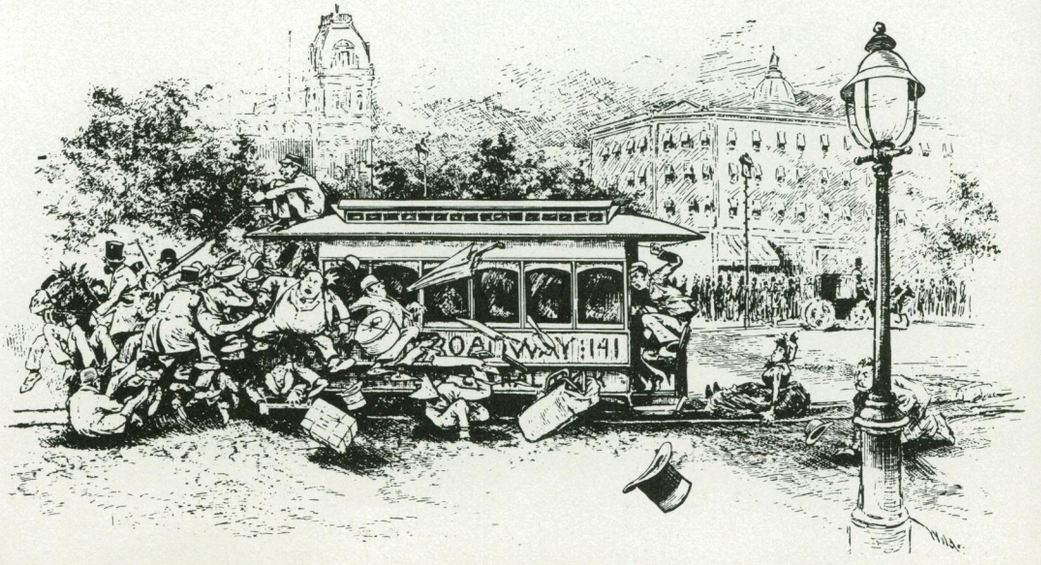
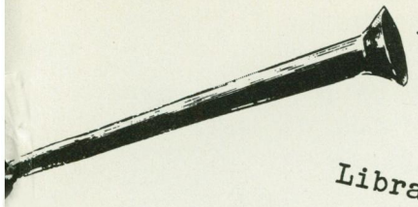


"We must manipulate media, make news, create information happenings."



By Don Roberts

LIBRARIANSHIP

Libraryland

Libraryland is ideal for the development of alternate work/life styles and

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"We will never try what has succeeded in the past for in point of fact nothing has."

Abbie Hoffman

"Rise up and abandon the Creeping Meatball."

Yippie Slogan

★ ★

services. With the exception of the rest of the education system and the military-industrial complex there does not exist in our society a better example of the truth of Abbie's remark than our so-called profession and the institutions manned by it. When we get serious about something (eg, "the disadvantaged" and censorship), it is often too late, and then we put our seriousness in the wrong places (eg, backing up with subsidiary earnestness the belated efforts of the publishing industry and the Freedom to Read Foundation).

In spite of the fact that eighty per cent of the nation's librarians are women and eighty per cent of the administrators of libraries are men, we still have

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This footnote was to have incorporated financial statistics comparing the budgets of our paranoid national information systems (CIA, FBI, USIS, etc.) with those of LC, state and large city libraries. The figures for our fear information systems are completely unavailable, even from within. Yippie Librarianship must use every imaginable tactic to divert funds from these military-industrial complex information systems (including and especially those of the "think tanks") into the libraries which should be serving the American public. We should be primary and the paranoid systems should be secondary. Until we reverse the system as it now exists the library will continue to wither and become an object of ridicule and disinterest.

eighty to ninety per cent matriarchies (sorry about that, American Ladies Association) in Libraryland USA. The "Momism" (Generation of Vipers) atmosphere is a great one for Yippie activity. In the midst of polite flower arrangements, facetious solemnity, prissy bookcover bulletin boards and other ephemera, much of interest in high-jinks can and should take place.

Good (elan vital) YIPPIE style thrives in juxtaposition. In the quiet, traditional, uncomfortable, drab working and services spaces of libraries (especially the hallowed halls of the modern monumentals) the Age of Aquarius flowers to great effect. The seeds are you and your associates, patrons and other assorted allies. COLOR—posters, wall paper and bright paints (disregard the Maintenance Dept., usually even more conservative and reactionary than administration)—must climb the walls. Dust-ladened air (or the opposite, a refrigerated vacuum of airconditioning) should have the benefit of incense and other helpful scents. Comfort is extremely important (try cushions recovered from the Salvation Army Store and plenty of cheap, dispensable ash trays). SOUND is crucial, white or otherwise . . . have disposable ear plugs available for patrons and staff who insist on pre-"Acoustical Age" silences. Keep a good assortment of Stephen Potter Gamesmanship & Lifemanship confusion ploys and

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"Railroads are a great prop. You can do some awful wild things with them."

Buster Keaton

"Yippies are leaders without followers."

Jerry Rubin

★ ★

tactics available during uptight transitions into the new environment.

Costumes are primary for YIPPIE effectiveness. Coats, ties, shirts, dresses (big heel and Saul Steinberg), shoes and other uptight regalia have been regulation for overground, WASP activities for years and years and have not made us attractive nor professionalized us. Why not come out in the open a bit more with the work clothes of your choice: textures, ornaments, boots, wigs, naturals, minis and maxis and midis, bib overalls, Levis, Lees, bandannas, see-throughs, styles to do with your personal life style. OFF PERSONA SCHIZOPHRENIA! But remember your (Civil Service?) "image," and remember the sagacious words of Marshall McLuhan when he says that preoccupation with your image will tell your public where you stand with technology. A spacesuit may be too obvious.

Pinned on the organization chart? Libraries tend to run the single wing, line/staff military style. Why not the T formation (Norman Mailer), the I, or the new corporate models? The masochistic enjoyment of a slow crawl to the "top" of a senile (Peter Principle) civil service heap is all over. There is no reason to accept illegitimate, assumed (albeit polite) authority based upon

longevity. There are no self-evident truths. PARTICIPATION is the key. Defy precedent with ideas, life force and w o r k . Make love at all meetings.

Work must be in new modules. Change your job description every day. Deny the staleness of the system by changing your style and work environment. Try to computerize out the busy work routine and clerical tasks which prevent YIPPIE professional work. Move on from routine to the function of creative information handling. Love of work does in the clock. If you can't love it, you might just as well leave it (a false sense of duty and long suffering responsibility have kept our library gig pitiful for too long as it is). Libraries are not shelf lists, catalogs, furniture, etc., not buildings, not collections, nor addresses. Your movements in the world of information must be as flexible as the nature of information, multidimensional and multimedia. Libraries without walls, mobility in information.

Words like "joy" and "revolution" have been utterly assassinated by Madison Avenue. Their unslaughtered synonyms should be the unserious guides to the American Library Revolution. This new medium/millennium is "in your head," DO YOUR THING, Baby. Wear clichés inherited from your predecessors like the

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Librarianship
for the hell of it.

We are utterly free
to change and experiment
with our profession.
PERIOD.

Our precedents
are disastrous.

"The most important fact about
Spaceship Earth: an instruction
book didn't come with it."

Buckminster Fuller

"Be realistic, demand the impossible."

Student Slogan

★ ★

polite little campaign buttons that they are ("Be all you <u>can</u> be: READ") and <u>l i v e</u> the latest: "America, drink it or smoke it," "Libraries to the Electric People," "America change it or lose it." . . . and role (not goal).

YIPPIES are media transmitters, not print pushers/apologists. We must manipulate media, make news, create information happenings. "Everything is information" (McLuhan), including print. Which means that we must use TV, radio, information satellites, TWX, telephone, dinosaur bookmobiles, ESP, spinner racks and whatever else (even bookshelves) we can get our hands on. We are no longer a subsidiary of the publishing industry. We are free to deal with information in freewheeling, twentieth century style.

Young people (variously called bohemians, hippies, artists, yippies and other less savory names) have anticipated the so-called "Age of Leisure," time on my, your and everybody else's hands. Computerized into a vacuum? No goals, simple roles and lots of seconds, minutes, hours, days and years to <u>Do It</u>. The library has dreaded those who use it as a hangout and catered to a small segment of the silent majority; "move on, move on, can't you see that we've got more important things to do around here," etc. Now learning has become a constant

recreation process, myth, non-compulsory, a kind of groovy religion. Entertainment and education have merged. So YIPPIE librarians must see to it that new EXPO library environments are hangouts for the new mass leisure class. We have to be indispensable to those misplaced by the twenty-hour week, early retirement and out of work because it is good for the economy (including ours).

Away with 1984. F*CK CENSORSHIP. "Up against your own mind and genitals, censor!" No more backdoor checkouts, Marjorie Fiske subterfuge censorships, Protestant ethic and Knights of Columbus gyrations. Celebrate freedom and openness and stop the "we're going to send a messenger to the King" type of Kafka dodge with the censors. Off with the milktoast "liberal" attitude of selecting out the Right or buying with a bogus balancing act shuck. More often than not the far-out Right has a legitimate beef. Do subjective selection with the guts to back it up. Give hardcore bigots (Left, Right and Sideways) satisfaction with theater, spectacles, in which you are the most seasoned practitioners, actors and actresses. Act the thing out and try to keep the disastrous polarization down.

"Act first, analyze later. Impulse, not theory makes great leaps forward."

Jerry Rubin

"We've got to be as exciting as the Mets."

Jerry Rubin

"Kids who grew up in the post-1950s live in a world of supermarkets, color TV commercials, guerrilla war, international media, psychedelics, rock 'n' roll, and moon walks. For us nothing is impossible. We can do anything."

Jerry Rubin

"If we hadn't looked ahead . . . we wouldn't have anything to look back on."

Ad by a Western Electric manufacturing unit for Bell Telephone

Now is the time to celebrate the joy of information, multimedia service. We must lessen our deadly earnestness, hierarchical fiat and the dependence on patterns of the past. Liberate life from those trying to bury it in paper pollution (especially suggestions forms) and polite postures. We can recycle our paper waste into new library architectures to house fantastic multi-media EXPO structures ("ask the International Paper Company"). Disrupt institutional bullshit in favor of building a new institution based upon real needs (vs. incunabula and first editions for example): non-compulsory learning, positive leisure, the celebration of everything as information/entertainment.

National, state and local meetings should reflect this celebration of multidimensional service. Ego rhetoric (anti this and that) on the floor must give way to small group discussion and updating. Spaceship earth moves through space at 66,650 mph. Interminable grievances and fake democracy must be exchanged for trust in and the formation of groups which can make decisions. We need energy exchanges, love, soul power, not generational battles and great infusions of alcohol at publishers parties (our way out so far). Why not dance, sing and indulge ourselves in activity which would get us high rather than wasting our nervous systems?

Ps. 3 Basic YIPPIE Demands:

ONE. A Library of Congress Information Satellite NOW (to service state libraries, cooperative library systems, large city libraries, and embassy and national libraries in other countries). This LC information network should be linked with a United States Broadcasting Corporation (like BBC) so that radio and TV transmission could reach homes, individual schools and other institutions from LC as well.

TWO. Library service to popular culture in multimedia formats (especially via radio and television) for all library communities. Sophisticated up-to-date standards and plans should be adopted to facilitate this. Buckminster said it recently: "Utopia or Oblivion."

THREE. All librarians should be willing to take a stand on the changes necessary for the survival of access to information in a post-literate, computerized, semi-Fascist society. So our new professional ethics and expertise will have to incorporate the guts and humor of the YIPPIES and the PANTHERS and the ideas and genius of David Sarnoffs and Buckminster Fullers.

"Try to computerize out the busy work routine and clerical tasks which prevent YIPPEE professional work."
"Make love at all meetings."
"Costumes are primary for YIPPIE effectiveness."